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THE ACADEMY OF SCIENCES OF THE CHINESE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC

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After the capitulation of Japan in 1945, Chinese scientists eagerly planned to take active part in the establishment of peace in their nation.

However, these plans never materialized. After the ouster of the Japanese forces, American troops took over the buildings which had been used for science before hostilities. For example, in Shanghai, American officers and their families set up housekeeping in the building formerly occupied by the Central Institute of Natural Sciences, and its laboratories were used for kennels.

Scientific buildings in Nanking, Peiping and other centers of eastern China were rebuilt slowly, their activities being curbed greatly by the backward political practices of the Kuomintang. Difficult economic and political factors, an unceasing war -- all these placed science on a very insecure footing.

It has been due only to the great victory of the Chinese people over the forces of reaction that scientists of the Chinese People's Republic were able finally to serve the positive expansion of the national economy.

The Central People's Government made every effort to organize Chinese Scientists. In July 1949, it convened a conference in Peiping for the purpose of discussing plans for the organization of an All-China Conference of Scientific Workers. From December 1949 on, many of the Chinese ministries initiated conferences in which Chinese scientists participated, at which problems connected with steel, fuel, fishing, agriculture, etc., were discussed.

At the end of 1949 the Central People's Government joined the Academy in Nanking and the National Academy at Peiping and formed the Academy of Sciences of the Chinese People's Republic. The primary purposes of this new academy were to assist in the reconstruction and reestablishment of the national economy and to develop science and culture.

- 1 -

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CONFIDENTIAL

50X1-HUM

The academy has been placed under the jurisdiction of the Government Administration Council. It is under the direct cognizance of the Committee of Culture and Education. The administration of the academy has been placed in the able hands of the renowned Chinese scientist Ko Mo-jo as president, who is aided by four vice-presidents: Ch'en Po-ta, Li Ssu-kuang, T'ao Meng-ho and Chu K'o-chen. In view of its recent organization, no membership limitations have been enacted yet, and at present there are some 400 members on the roster, including scientific-engineering personnel.

The everyday activities of the academy, in carrying out the directives of the president and vice-presidents, are governed by the chancery of the academy. The academy also has a Scientific Plans Administration which is charged with the control, coordination, and planning of scientific research work in the Academy. A Division for International Communication has also been organized. At present this last division is engaged in the assembly of a library containing publications from all nations. Special effort is being made to obtain all pertinent publications of the USSR and the People's Democracies. Plans are also being considered for the organization of a Publishing and Subscriptions Administration.

The scientific institutions of the Academy of Sciences of the Chinese People's Republic are currently going through the throes of organization and development. Every attempt is being made to use the facilities of former institutes. Thus, the following new institutes have been based on the facilities established for previous institutes: new history, archaeology, linguistics, sociology, contemporary physics, applied physics, physical chemistry, organic chemistry, physiology, biochemistry, experimental biology, hydrobiology, botany, geophysics, geology and geological prospecting, mathematics, psychology, geography, polytechnology; also, several observatories and industrial research bases. Institutes of the academy are located in Shanghai, Peiping, and Nanking. Notwithstanding the relative youth of the various institutes, each has been assigned a definite problem in the program for the reconstruction of the republic.

The research programs of the scientific institutes are based on the requirements of industry, agriculture and public health. Thus, the Institute of Organic Chemistry (Shanghai) acts as an advisor to the Administration of Agricultural Problems and for the Regulation of Water in Eastern China on matters dealing with the elimination of fungus spores which are harmful to cotton and wheat. The Geology and Geological Prospecting Institute (Nanking) has organized several expeditions to determine the locations of new iron and coal deposits. The Institute of Applied Physics is carrying out research in the field of optics, and has already developed several advanced optical devices for microscopes and theodolites. This institute includes a Division for the Construction and Manufacture (grinding) of Lenses, which maintains close liaison with the various optical industries in helping to satisfy the optical equipment requirements of the nation.

There has been a complete reorganization of the research methods employed by Chinese biologists. Previously, there were five Chinese biological institutes which operated on a wholly independent basis and maintained no liaison between themselves. This unwieldy situation has been solved by the reorganization of the former five institutes into three institutes, each of which has been assigned a definite field of science so as to eliminate all duplication. Provisions have also been made for an interchange of ideas and the establishment of continual liaison. Thus, the Institute of Experimental Biology (Shanghai) is charged with research in the field of embryology, phytopathology and physiology. Various physicochemical research methods are utilized. The Institute of Hydrobiology (Shanghai) specializes in research in

- 2 -

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

50X1-HUM

the field of aquatic fauna. Recently, this institute organized two hydrobiological experimental stations, located at Tsingtao (for the study of marine biology) and at Wu-hsi on Lake Ta-hu in Kiangsu Province (for the study of fresh-water fish). The Botany Institute (Peiping) will study the flora of China and will coordinate the activities of Chinese scientists conducting research in this field. Special attention will be given to the study of medicinal plants, pasture vegetation, and caoutchouc-bearing plants.

Notwithstanding the confusion due to the organizational period, institutes in the field of biology have achieved some success in determining means for controlling rodents in cotton fields and in the hybridization of plants. Scientific personnel conducting research in the field of medicine have developed new medicinal preparations. Chinese biologists are translating T. D. Lysenko's works and other brochures and pamphlets on Michurinian biology into the Chinese language.

The Academy of Sciences of the Chinese People's Republic will publish various periodicals on general matters and two periodicals of a specialized nature. The latter are: Scientific News and Science in China. The first of these will contain material of an informational nature; the other will record the results of research on important problems. The purpose of the periodicals will be to acquaint the reader with the scientific achievements of the USSR and the People's Democracies.

There is a continuing effort to strengthen and expand the scientific bonds between the Academy of Sciences of the Chinese People's Republic and the Academy of Sciences USSR. Some evidence of this may be had in the fact that during the first quarter of 1951 the Academy of Sciences USSR sent more than 5,000 titles to the library of the Academy of Sciences of the Chinese People's Republic and to libraries of the larger educational and scientific centers of China. Not too long ago, the Academy of Sciences USSR acted as hosts to the president and vice-presidents of the Chinese academy, who expressed great interest in the manner in which the Academy of Sciences USSR establishes scientific research programs, develops the organizational structure of its institutes, establishes its scientific plans, and provides for the adoption of completed research projects by industry.

During the latter half of April and the first half of May 1951 the Academy of Sciences USSR played host to a group of Chinese scientists headed by Prof Liang Hsi. The members of this delegation were introduced to the operating procedures of the Timber Institute, Institute of Higher Nervous Activity, Mathematics Institute imeni V. A. Steklov, and others under the Academy of Sciences USSR.

On 12 May 1951, the Academy of Sciences USSR arranged a meeting between scientists of the Chinese academy and the Academy of Sciences USSR. A. N. Nesmeyanov, president, Academy of Sciences USSR, in his welcoming address, claimed that this friendship between the scientists of China and the USSR would serve to place the development of science in China and the USSR on a cooperative basis.

Prof Liang Hsi and Chu K'o-chen, vice-president, Academy of Sciences, Chinese People's Republic, tendered their appreciation for the aid rendered by the Academy of Sciences USSR in the development of sciences in China. They were also most specific regarding the continuing strengthening of the bonds between Soviet and Chinese scientists. They felt that the friendship which has been established and which will be fostered between the scientists of the USSR and China will be most instrumental in bringing about peace throughout the world.

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- 3 -

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